Biblica 1982.

A Critique of Two Recent Metrical Systems*

In the field of Hebrew poetics, the study of meter is an area of importance and difficulty. If an accurate description of the Biblical Hebrew metrical system could be discovered, not only would the rhythmical pattern of Hebrew poems be elucidated, but researchers would also have a reliable tool to use to determine the original text of the poem. In addition, the establishment of the metrical structure of a Hebrew poem would help the exegete to provide a clear and objective standard by which the poetic line could be divided. Nevertheless, up to this day, no single approach to Hebrew meter has been presented with enough persuasion to convince even a majority of scholars of its validity.

In the past, most scholars(1) have accepted the Ley-Sievers-Budde(2) system of accentual meter. Yet, many modern researchers(3) are disenchanted with this approach because it does not offer consistent results and often involves many emendations. As a result, several new proposals have been offered towards a solution of the problem of Hebrew meter. This study will examine two of these

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(1) For a brief summary of the history of the study of Hebrew meter, see D. STUART, *Studies in Early Hebrew Meter* (Missoula, Montana 1976) 1-10.

(2) J. LEY, *Grundzüge der Rythmus, des Vers- und Strophenbaues in der hebräischen Poesie* (Halle 1875); IDEM, *Die Metrischen Formen der hebräischen Poesie* (Leipzig 1886); IDEM, *Leitfaden der Metrik der hebräischen Poesie* (Halle 1887); K. BUDDE, "Das hebräische Klagelied", *ZAW* 2 (1882) 1-52; E. SIEVERS, *Metrische Studien.* I: *Studien zur hebräischen Metrik* (Leipzig 1901); IDEM, II: *Die hebräische Genesis* (Leipzig 1904).

(3) D. STUART, *Studies in Early Hebrew Meter,* 1-10.

new approaches(4), in order to determine how satisfactorily they describe the poems' rhythmical structure. These two systems were chosen for analysis for different reasons. On the one hand, the Cross-Freedman-Stuart method of counting syllables is becoming increasingly popular in Old Testament and Ugaritic studies. For this reason, it merits examination. On the other hand, the second method here under analysis, that of the Polish linguist Jerzy Kuryłowicz, has only recently come to the attention of Old Testament scholars and shows promise of explaining some of the problems of Hebrew metrics.

In order to examine these two systems of metrics, the following method will be employed. First, both the syllable counting and syntactic-accentual(5) approach will be described. Both systems will then be applied to two Old Testament poems, chosen from two different chronological periods. These are Deut 33 (dated by most to the 12th or 11th century B.C.), and Jer 12 (7th century). Poems from different periods have been selected for analysis because, as Segert has pointed out(6), Hebrew meter *may* have changed during its long history. Thus one metrical system may be effective in one period but not in another. Lastly, the analysis of these poems will show the advantages and disadvantages of both the systems.

(4) Besides the two approaches analyzed in the present paper, there have been other new suggestions in regard to the correct manner of scanning Hebrew (and Ugaritic) poetry. For example, see H. KOSMALA, "Form and Structure in Ancient Hebrew Poetry", *VT* 14 (1964) 423-455; IDEM, "Form and Structure of Ancient Hebrew Poetry (continued)", *VT* 16 (1966) 152-180; B. MARGALIT, "Introduction to Ugaritic Prosody", *Ugarit-Forschungen* 7 (1975) 289-313; S. SEGERT, "Vorarbeiten zur hebräischen Metrik", *ArOr* 21 (1953) 481-542; IDEM, "Vorarbeiten zur hebräischen Metrik, II", *ArOr* 25 (1957) 190-200; and S. B. PARKER, "Parallelism and Prosody in Ugaritic Narrative Verse", *Ugarit-Forschungen* 6 (1974) 283-294. For the position that Ugaritic (and Hebrew) poetry does not yield to metric analysis, see G. D. YOUNG, "Ugaritic Prosody", *JNES* 9 (1950) 124-133.

(5) For convenience sake, I have labelled Kuryłowicz' method "syntactical-accentual", feeling that it accurately describes the main points of the method.

(6) S. SEGERT, "Vorarbeiten, I and II".

Syllable-Count Meter

Following their teacher W.F. Albright(7), Frank Cross and David Noel Freedman adopted the Ley–Sievers–Budde approach to Hebrew meter in their early writings(8). This approach counts only *accented* syllables and was the dominant theory of the day even outside of the Albright circle.

As early as 1960, however, Freedman for the first time discussed the possibility of counting syllables in order to determine the metric structure of an Old Testament poem. In his article "Archaic Forms in Early Hebrew Poetry," he states:

> It may be suggested, however, that the early Israelites had a strong sense of meter, that is, a conscious poetic measurement, more precise than the commonly accepted accentual system, though falling far short of the quantitative metrical systems of Greek or Latin verse. While syllable-counting is both imprecise and pedestrian, it affords a clue to the rhythmic structure of Hebrew poetry, and an occasional glimpse at the Israelite poet composing his verse(9).

While neither Freedman nor anyone else developed this system in the sixties(10), many articles in the past decade were devoted to the structural analysis of individual Hebrew poems on the basis of syllable counting. Through the work of Cross(11), Freedman(12),

(7) W. F. ALBRIGHT, "The Oracles of Balaam", *JBL* 63 (1944) 207-233; IDEM, "The Old Testament and Canaanite Language and Literature", *CBQ* 7 (1945) 5-31; IDEM, "The Psalm of Habakkuk" in H. H. ROWLEY (ed.), *Studies in Old Testament Prophecy* (Edinburgh 1957); IDEM, "Some Remarks on the Song of Moses in Deuteronomy 33", *VT* 9 (1959) 339-346; IDEM, *Yahweh and the God of Canaan* (Garden City, N. Y. 1965).

(8) F. M. CROSS and D. N. FREEDMAN, "A Royal Song of Thanksgiving: II Samuel 22 – Psalm 18", *JBL* 72 (1953) 15-34; IDEM, "The Song of Miriam", *JNES* 14 (1955) 237-250; IDEM, *Studies in Ancient Yahwistic Poetry* (Missoula, Montana 1954).

(9) D. N. FREEDMAN, "Archaic Forms in Early Hebrew Poetry", *ZAW* 72 (1960) 167.

(10) With the exception of D. N. FREEDMAN, "The Structure of Job 3", *Bib* 49 (1968) 503-510.

(11) F. M. CROSS, "Prose and Poetry in the Mythic and Epic Texts from Ugarit", *HTR* 67 (1974) 1-15.

(12) In addition to articles cited above, note D. N. FREEDMAN, "The Structure of Psalm 137", in H. GOEDICKE (ed.), *Near Eastern Studies in Honor of William Foxwell Albright* (Baltimore 1971) 187-205; IDEM, "The Refrain in David's Lament over Saul and Jonathan" in *Ex Orbe Religionum: Studia Geo Widengren* (vol. 1) (Leiden 1972) 115-126; IDEM, "Acrostics and Metrics in Hebrew Poetry", *HTR* 65 (1972) 367-392; IDEM, "Strophe and Meter in Exodus 15", in BREAM, HEIM and MOORE (eds.), *A Light unto My Path: Old Testament Studies in Honor of Jacob C. Myers* (Philadephia 1974) 163-203; IDEM, "Divine Names and Titles in Early Hebrew Poetry", in F. M. CROSS (ed.), *Magnalia Dei: The Mighty Acts of God* (Garden City 1976) 55-107; IDEM, "The Twenty-Third Psalm", in Louis L. ORLIN (ed.), *Michigan Oriental Studies in Honor of George C. Cameron* (Ann Arbor 1976) 139-166; IDEM, "Pottery, Poetry and Prophecy: An Essay on Biblical Poetry", *JBL* 96 (1977) 5-26; IDEM, "Psalm 113 and the Song of Hannah", *Eretz Israel* 14 (1978) 56-69; D. N. FREEDMAN and C. F. HYLAND, "Psalm 29: A Structural Analysis", *HTR* 66 (1973) 237-256.

(13) D. K. STUART, *Studies in Early Hebrew Poetry.*

(14) D. L. CHRISTENSEN, "The Prosodic Structure of Amos 1-2", *HTR* 67 (1975) 427-436; IDEM, "The Acrostic of Nahum Reconsidered", *ZAW* 87 (1975) 17-30.

(15) P. D. HANSON, "The Song of Heshbon and David's Nîr", *HTR* 61 (1968) 279-320; IDEM, *The Dawn of Apocalyptic* (Philadelphia, 2nd ed., 1979).

(16) A. EHLEN, "The Poetic Structure of a Hodayah from Qumran", Ph. D. dissertation, Harvard University, 1970.

(17) R. G. BOLING, *Judges* (AB GA; Garden City 1975).

(18) R. C. CULLEY, "Metrical Analysis of Classical Hebrew Poetry", in J. W. WEVERS and D. D. REDFORD (eds.), *Essays on the Ancient Semitic World* (Toronto 1970).

(19) M. DAHOOD, "A New Metrical Pattern in Biblical Poetry", *CBQ* 29 (1967) 574-579.

(20) J. H. STEK, "The Stylistics of Hebrew Poetry", *Calvin Theological Journal* 9 (1974) 190-200.

(21) F. M. CROSS and R. J. SALEY, "Phoenician Incantations on a Plaque of Seventh Century B. C. from Arslan Tash in Upper Syria", *BASOR* 197 (1970) 42-49.

(22) A. EHLEN, "Poetic Structure of a Hodayah".

their students (Stuart(13), Christensen(14), Hanson(15), Ehlen(16)) and colleagues (Boling(17), Culley(18), Dahood(19), and Stek(20)) a considerable number of ancient Hebrew poems have been treated, starting with the earliest Hebrew poems, through the eighth century Hebrew prophets (Christensen), and a seventh century plaque from Arslan Tash(21), to late Biblical poetry and even a poem from Qumran(22).

Methodology

Even though a number of studies have applied syllable counting to poems, theoretical discussions of methodology have been limited to two. Freedman has best summarized(23) his views in his article "Pottery, Poetry, and Prophecy: An Essay on Biblical Poetry"(24). Douglas Stuart has also dealt extensively with methodology in a dissertation which he completed under F.M. Cross at Harvard(25).

A close examination of these writings show that, while some fundamental and important differences remain between them, Freedman and Stuart hold many ideas in common. For example, they agree that, since there is no explanation of Old Testament metrics by the ancient Israelites themselves, one must be devised inductively(26); they also agree that the method which shows the symmetry of the poem in the simplest and most detailed manner is best. They, of course, also agree on the fact that syllable counting is the method which meets their aims most effectively.

A second major similarity between Freedman and Stuart is that neither believes that the ancient Israelite poet consciously counted the syllables. Even though the poet was not consciously counting syllables while composing, however, the result, according to Freedman at least, will "inevitably" be a perfectly structured poem(27).

While agreeing on the above points, Freedman and Stuart disagree on the oral origin of the poetry. According to Stuart (and his teacher Cross), both Ugaritic and Hebrew poetry show signs of oral composition and recitation. These signs include the presence of formula, thematic structure and lack of enjambment(28). Heavily dependent upon the work of the Harvard classical scholars, M. Parry and A. Lord, Stuart asserts that the presence of a high percentage of formula demonstrates a consistent metrical pattern in a poem(29).

(23) "Pottery, Poetry, and Prophecy" is his most comprehensive summary of the method, but many of his works which deal with individual psalms also present brief methodological statements.

(24) *JBL* 96 (1977) 5-26.

(25) D. K. STUART, *Studies in Early Hebrew Meter.*

(26) This is unlike studies of classical meter where Aristotle's *Poetics* is available.

(27) D. N. FREEDMAN, "Pottery, Poetry, and Prophecy", 15.

(28) D. K. STUART, *Studies in Early Hebrew Meter,* 10.

(29) As a matter of fact, Parry defined the formula in Homer as "a group of words which is regularly employed under the same metrical conditions to express a given essential idea", cited in ROBERT B. COOTE, "The Application of the Oral Theory to Biblical Hebrew Literature", *Semeia* 5 (1976) 52.

In other words, the ancient Israelite or Canaanite poet had a "stockpile" of formulae which he could use during recitation. In order to make this possible, there had to be a well-defined structure to the metrical pattern of the poem he was reciting. The poem itself then was not memorized by the bard; rather he spontaneously composed it at each recitation. The inventory of traditional formula as well as the consistent metrical pattern gave the singer this ability. Thus one of the motivating factors in Cross and Stuart's metrical analysis, as opposed to Freedman, is the assumption that the poems were originally composed orally.

Two additional differences between Stuart and Freedman must be taken into account in this analysis. First, there is a basic disagreement in regard to their approaches to the MT. Freedman takes a very conservative position. In his own words: "...it would be methodologically untenable to emend the text in the interests of a certain metrical or strophic structure or to base such a structure on an emended text"(30). As a result, Freedman bases his analysis of Old Testament poems on the MT and its vocalization. There are, however, certain exceptions to this rule. For example, he will occasionally emend the text in favor of what he considers to be the original state of the text (e.g. he omits the conjunction at the beginning of a colon, *'et* and *'aśer* are omitted as prosaic elements, etc.). Yet, Freedman believes that "the differences (in terms of changing the syllable count) are very small"(31) between using the Massoretic text and his type of reconstructed text. At the opposite extreme, Stuart radically emends the text, in order to reconstruct the original state of the text. While he states that an emendation should not be considered on metric grounds alone(32), he also says that the analyst may have to 'improve' the MT without versional evidence, even in cases where the MT is in perfectly good condition(33).

A second area of disagreement between the two scholars concerns the nature of the results which a syllable count will give.

(30) D. N. FREEDMAN, "Strophe and Meter in Exodus 15", 163.

(31) D. N. FREEDMAN, "Psalm 113 and the Song of Hannah", 58.

(32) D. K. STUART, *Studies in Early Hebrew Meter,* 15.

(33) D. K. STUART, *Studies in Early Hebrew Meter,* 21.

While Stuart[34] holds that a syllable count yields the meter of a poem, Freedman emphasizes that syllable counting is not a 'magical'[35] key which gets to the heart of a Hebrew poem, but simply a convenient way to describe the structure of a poem[36]. This difference between Freedman and Stuart also explains their reactions to other methods of metric analysis. Freedman is open to virtually any approach to Hebrew meter, but still holds to the primacy of syllable counting. He thinks that "the only requirement of an adequate methodology is to be consistent"[37]. As a result, in his analysis of Exod 15[38], he uses three different methods, counting accents; counting vowel quality; and counting syllables. While Freedman is open to the use of other metrical tools, Stuart believes that the syllable count method is the only suitable one.

Tools for Analysis

Proponents of the syllable counting school use two main tools. The first is the reconstruction and revocalization of the text. It has already been mentioned that the extent to which such work takes place constitutes a point of considerable disagreement. Nonetheless, they all reconstruct the text to a certain degree before they scan it. Stuart believes that it is necessary to restore the text to its state at the time of composition, in order to do an effective job of delineating the metric structure of the poem, and he has a long list of rules in order to accomplish this goal[39]. Freedman also mentions a few of these rules like the contraction of diphthongs in the North, the original monosyllabic nature of segolates etc. Stuart goes much further, however, and even mentions principles which would not affect syllable count[40].

As will be pointed out below, some of his rules allow him to vacillate on the number of syllables in a line and facilitate the process of discovering 'metrically' equivalent cola. A second tool is mentioned by both Cross[41] and Stuart[42], and that tool helps the analyst get a quick overview of the pattern of the relative lengths of the cola in a poem. This is done simply by designating a colon which is between 3 and 5 syllables as *breve* and one between 8 and 13 as *longum*.

Results and Conclusions of the School

After scanning many poems, members of the syllable counting school have come to some conclusions concerning the nature of meter in the Old Testament. There is general agreement that the meter throughout the Hebrew Bible[43] is mixed[44]. This means that there

[34] While it is true that he leaves the question of internal feet within the poetic line an unanswered question, he definitely believes that syllable counting solves the question of meter.

[35] D. N. FREEDMAN, "Pottery, Poetry and Prophecy", 10.

[36] M. O'CONNOR, *Hebrew Verse Structure* (Winona Lake, Indiana 1980), 30-35 argues that: "Neither Freedman nor Culley has ever written of syllabic meter; they use syllable counting as a way of describing features of verse structure which are intuitively recognizable but which have so far resisted descriptive efforts...." He further accuses Stuart and Cooper of not recognizing this fact. Though O'Connor's book originally was a dissertation under the direction of Freedman, his understanding of Freedman needs modification. In Freedman's earlier writings, he obviously relates the counting of syllables to *metrical* analysis. For example, after translating and counting the syllables of Psalm 29, FREEDMAN and HYLAND, "Psalm 29", 738 state: "In determining *metrical* patterns we have followed a syllable-counting method". At the end of his study of Job 3, FREEDMAN, "The Structure of Job 3", 506, says that he will "append a final note on the feasibility of syllable-counting in determining metric structure". He then, through counting syllables, demonstrates the chapter's "metrical uniformity" (508). It is only in his most recent writings that Freedman shows a propensity to disassociate syllable counting from metrical analysis. D. N. FREEDMAN and F. I. ANDERSON, *Hosea* (AB 24; Garden City, New York 1980) 76, 77.

[37] D. N. FREEDMAN, "Psalm 113 and the Song of Hannah", 57.

[38] D. N. FREEDMAN, "Strophe and Meter in Exodus 15".

[39] D. K. STUART, *Studies in Early Hebrew Meter*, 24-28.

[40] See most of the rules under "Vocalisation", D. K. STUART, *Studies in Early Hebrew Meter*, 27-28.

[41] F. M. CROSS, "The Song of the Sea and Canaanite Myth", *Journal for Theology and the Church* 5 (1968) 1-25.

[42] D. K. STUART, *Studies in Early Hebrew Meter*, 12.

[43] And Ugaritic for that matter.

[44] D. K. STUART, *Studies in Early Hebrew Meter*, 14-15, defines three kinds of meter which appear in Hebrew poetry. First, there is mixed meter where cola within bicola are metrically equivalent but bear no relationship to other bicola. Second, there is irregular meter where there is no balance even within bicola. And last there is unbalanced meter which occurs when the bicola have different counts but form a broader pattern with other bicola in the poem.

is frequent agreement in the number of syllables between the cola of a bicolon or tricolon[45], but that there is no detectable wider pattern. Stuart notes the existence of some irregular meters[46]; that is, meters which show no agreement between cola[47].

Syntactic-Accentual Meter

A second contemporary approach to Hebrew meter is formulated by the Polish linguist Jerzy Kuryłowicz[48] and adopted by Alan Cooper[49]. Their syntactic-accentual meter[50] has not yet been applied by any other student of Hebrew poetry[51], so the following exposition of this approach will be restricted to the writings of these two men.

Kuryłowicz makes clear the central principle of his innovative system of Hebrew poetry by contrasting it with the well-known approach of Sievers[52]. He states that Sievers conceived meter as each word accent having a single metrical stress. For Kuryłowicz, though, each word *complex* has one and only one metrically significant accent. As he states it: "Sievers' principal tenet 'no accented syllable (of the colloquial language) can function as a metrical *thesis*' has been replaced by 'an *arsis* is always represented by *an accented*

(45) A hypothetical example of a mixed pattern is 8:8::7:7::6:6, etc.

(46) D. K. STUART, *Studies in Early Hebrew Meter*, 14, 15.

(47) Example: 7:5::7:8, etc.

(48) J. KURYŁOWICZ, *Studies in Semitic Grammar and Metrics* (Wroclaw 1972) and J. KURYŁOWICZ, *Metrik und Sprachgeschichte* (Wroclaw 1975).

(49) A. M. COOPER, "Biblical Poetics: A Linguistic Approach", Ph. D. dissertation, Yale University, 1976.

(50) See footnote 5.

(51) Similar to it, however, is the word-meter of researchers, like MARGALIT, "Introduction to Ugaritic Prosody", 1973, KOSMALA, "Form and Structure I and II", and SEGERT, "Vorarbeiten I and II", (for the earliest period of Hebrew poetry). The main difference from Kuryłowicz' approach is the fact that he counts syntactical units rather than individual words. While word metrists would not give prefixed prepositions, conjunctions, etc. a separate stress, Kuryłowicz would go further and state that some independent words (like nouns and verbs) lose their accent when considered from a metrical viewpoint.

(52) KURYŁOWICZ, *Studies in Semitic Grammar and Metrics*, 166.

syllable (of the colloquial language)' "[53]. In other words, Sievers counted every word accent whereas Kuryłowicz allows for the possibility that a word-accent may not be metrically significant, i.e., that an accented syllable *may* not act as a metrical *arsis*. In missing this point, Kuryłowicz felt that Sievers had missed the 'key' to the understanding of Hebrew meter.

Two important concepts are frequently found in Kuryłowicz' writings, and their elucidation is crucial to understand his system of metrical analysis. These two notions are 1) sandhi and 2) *accentus dominus* and *accentus servus*. The two are closely related and will be treated together.

Sandhi refers to the assimilation which takes place between two words when they are pronounced without an internal pause. He established the existence of this phenomenon on the basis of the spirantization of initial *begadkefat* letters within members of a metrical unit. The metrical purpose of sandhi, according to Kuryłowicz, was simply the weakening of secondary accents to the point where they carried no metrical value. As he states: "Its (sandhi's) function was to confer the status of *thesis* to syllables which normally carried at least a weakened (secondary) stress"[54].

Sandhi leads to a discussion of *accentus dominus* and *accentus servus*. Due to sandhi, Kuryłowicz posits: "...the metrical integration of the hemistich into a constant number of word-complexes, each of them carrying one metrical accent"[55]. In other words, Kuryłowicz asserts that proclitics, enclitics and even individual words often lose their accent in Hebrew meter. The accent on a word in a Hebrew poem is either metrically significant *(accentus dominus)* or is secondary and weakened *(accentus servus)*. In the application of the method, the analyst must draw an absolute distinction between these two and must treat the latter, namely *accentus servus*, as non-existent:

> The metrical transformation of a spoken text consists in Heb. in the replacement of the gradual differences of word-stress by

(53) Kuryłowicz uses the term "*thesis*" to refer to unaccented words and "*arsis*" to refer to those which are accented. While this is the exact opposite of the original meaning of these words, it fits in with modern usage.

(54) J. KURYŁOWICZ, *Studies in Semitic Grammar and Metrics*, 175.

(55) J. KURYŁOWICZ, *Studies in Semitic Grammar and Metrics*, 167.

a simple opposition between *accent* and *lack of accent*, i.e. in the polarization between strong and weak syntactical accents, sanctioned by *metrical* sandhi(56).

In sum, Kuryłowicz' system is based on the combination of words into complexes characterized by one metrically significant accent *(dominus)*, though having secondary ones which are metrically irrelevant.

Method

First, Kuryłowicz does not group word-complexes together on the basis of semantic parallelism but rather uses grammatical criteria.

Second, he notes that Hebrew is endowed with an internal indication of the border of word-complexes, namely spirantization(57). Based on studies in the first and second books of Psalms, Kuryłowicz discovered that initial stops, when preceded by a word which ends in a vowel, are spirantized within metrical complexes, but that at the junctures of such complexes, there is no spirantization. Thus, Kuryłowicz concludes that this articulation provides an efficient way to isolate word-complexes.

Third, both Kuryłowicz and Cooper list ways in which words may combine to form word-complexes which are subsumed under one accent. Of course, proclitics and conjunctions have no independent metrical accent, and Kuryłowicz accordingly calls them "unaccented prefixes"(58). Furthermore, nouns in a construct relationship share a single metrical accent(59). A third category which shares one metrical accent are those words which are connected with a Masoretic *maqqef*. Lastly, when two morphemes co-exist in a close syntactical relationship, they bear one major accent(60).

According to both Kuryłowicz(61) and Cooper(62), the metrical stress of such complexes rests on the last member of the group(63).

(56) J. KURYŁOWICZ, *Studies in Semitic Grammar and Metrics*, 175.
(57) Called "lenition" by Kuryłowicz.
(58) J. KURYŁOWICZ, *Studies in Semitic Grammar and Metrics*, 172.
(59) A. COOPER, "Biblical Poetics", 33.
(60) This would include complexes such as the following: Subject (S) and Verb (V); V + S; V + Direct Object (DO), etc.
(61) J. KURYŁOWICZ, *Studies in Semitic Grammar and Metrics*, 172.
(62) A. COOPER, "Biblical Poetics", 33.
(63) (X + V́); (DO + V́), etc. are a few examples.

Advantages

Like those who adopt syllable counting, the proponents of the syntactic-accentual approach to Hebrew meter feel that their system has certain advantages over previous metrical theories. In contrast to the syllable counting method, Kuryłowicz' approach requires neither the reconstruction nor the revocalization of the text. This is a distinct advantage because the reconstruction of the text involves many difficulties about which scholars are very uncertain. Also, as has been mentioned, any metric theory which builds its case on an emended text is dubious from the start. Moreover, Cooper claims(64) that Kuryłowicz' method yields consistent results. He believes that its application to Hebrew poetry will result in demonstrating that many parts of a poem which in the past have been treated as metrically imbalanced are actually not.

Method of Analysis

As mentioned, two poems from different time periods have been chosen for analysis, using both the syllable counting and the syntactic-accentual methods. For practical reasons, only one part of Deut 33 and Jer 12 will be presented here.

There is a difference between Cross and Stuart, on the one hand, and Freedman, Cooper(65) and Kuryłowicz, on the other, concerning the type of text upon which they apply their different approaches(66). The latter use the unemended MT, whereas the former reconstruct the text. For this reason, on the following pages, both the MT and a reconstructed text are presented in transliteration.

The reconstructed text needs a word of explanation. Cross and Stuart believe that the correct meter of a poem can only be demonstrated on the basis of the poem as it was originally composed. This means that before analysing a poem, it must be restored to it original state. For Stuart, this includes "...textual revision, revocal-

(64) A. COOPER, "Biblical Poetics", 34.
(65) This is true even though COOPER, "Biblical Poetics", 49 n. 59, states that he does not rely on the MT as much as Kuryłowicz.
(66) This I demonstrated above.

ization, orthographic, paleographic, and other linguistic controls, and the systematic deletion of whatever prosaic material may have been interpolated within the original wording of the poem"(67). He further lists a series of rules in order to recapture the original text(68). For the purposes of this critique, though, only those grammatical features of the MT which affect the syllable count are reconstructed(69).

Also, in reconstructing the text, all the poems, regardless of date, are treated in the same manner. There are indeed differences, as in the use of *matres lectionis*, but, in the words of Stuart, who examined the eighth century poetry of Amos: "There are no differences between the poetry of this period and the period of the league and early monarchy that are so great as to affect syllable count"(70).

Syllable counts are given for both the MT and the reconstructed text. Since Stuart treated all of the early poems in the Old Testament, I was compelled to chose one that he had already done. I did not, however, consult Stuart's work on Deut 33 until I had completed my own analysis. Afterwards, the two results were compared,

(67) D. K. STUART, *Studies in Early Hebrew Meter*, 9.

(68) D. K. STUART, *Studies in Early Hebrew Meter*, 26-28.

(69) The following list are those rules I employ (based on Stuart's rules) to reconstruct the MT:

1. Segolates are treated as monosyllabic.
2. The *patah furtive* is omitted as a secondary insertion.
3. The same is true for *hateſs*, used with gutturals.
4. The conjunction (*waw*) is deleted when it appears at the beginning of a colon (cf. CROSS and FREEDMAN, "The Blessing of Moses", *JBL* 67 [1948] 198 n. 4).
5. The article, the relative (*'ăšer*) and the direct object marker (*'et*) are also deleted as secondary prosaic insertions.
6. Diphthongs were contracted in the North, but preserved in the South until the Exile.
7. "MT mayim, šamayim, etc. were originally segolates rather than plurals (maym, šamaym in the South; mem, šamem in the North)". (STUART, *Studies in Early Hebrew Meter*, 26).
8. The construct plural is vocalized - ē.

(70) D. K. STUART, *Studies in Early Hebrew Meter*, 198. In his analysis of a late poem, FREEDMAN, "The Structure of Psalm 137", though not certain, feels that the *'et* was in use by that time. My analysis omits the *'et* and if Freedman turns out to be correct, then the syllable count would be slightly modified. The poems, however, still would not display a consistent metrical pattern on the basis of the syllable count.

and in this manner, greater insight was gained into Stuart's own implementation of his rules.

In order to show the results of the syntactic-accentual method, lines are drawn between the word complexes within a colon which Kuryłowicz would describe as having one metrical stress. In those cases in which spirantization confirms a metrical unit, a line is written under the letter concerned; in those cases in which spirantization demonstrates the cohesiveness of a word group, a longer line is drawn beneath it. Finally, to the far right, the number of the metrical stresses is given according to the application of Kuryłowicz' system. St. means Stuart, R my own result.

begadkefat letter which confirms metrical structure (not spirantized after a word which ends in a vowel).

begadkefat letter which shows that two words are in the same metrical complex (spirantized after a word which ends in a vowel).

Deuteronomy 33

Masoretic Text	*Reconstructed Text*		
lihûḏāh wayō'mar			
šᵉma' yahwē | qôl yᵉhûḏāh	šᵉma' yahwē qôl yᵉhûḏāh	7a MT 8:8	
'el-'ammô | tᵉbî' ennû	'el-'ammô tᵉbi'ennû	R 8:7	2:2
		St. 8:8	
		St. retains *waw* at beginning of second colon	
rāb lô	yādēw (ya)rāb lô	7b MT 4:8	
'izr miṣṣārāw | tihyeh	'izr miṣṣārēw tihyeh	R 4/5:6	2:2
		St. 7:7	2
		St. emends	
'āmar		8) MT 8:9	
mēkā wᵉ'urēkā | lᵉ'îš		R 6:9	2:2
		St. omits as prose	
nissîtô | bᵉmassāh	nissîtô bᵉmassāh		
| 'al-mê mᵉrîbāh	tᵉrîbēhû 'al-mê mᵉrîbāh		
lᵉ'ābîw ūlᵉ'immô			

Masoretic Text	*Reconstructed Text*
a) wᵉ'eṯ-'ehāw | lō' hikkîr wᵉ' eṯ-bānāw | lō yāḏā	'ehew lō' hikkîr bānēw lō'yāḏā'
b) kî šāmᵉrû | imrāṯeḵā ûbᵉrîṯᵉḵā | yinṣōrû	kî šāmᵉrû 'imrāṯeḵā bᵉrîṯᵉḵā yinṣōrû
10) a) yôrû mišpāṭᵉḵā | lᵉya'aqōḇ wᵉṯôrāṯᵉḵā | lᵉyiśrā'ēl	yôrû mišpāṭēḵā lᵉya'qōḇ tôrāṯᵉḵā lᵉyiśrā'ēl
b) yāśîmû qᵉṭôrāḥ | bᵉ'appeḵā wᵉḵālîl | 'al-mizbᵉḥeḵā	yāśîmû qᵉṭôrāh bᵉ'appeḵā kālîl 'al-mizbᵉḥeḵā
11) a) bārēk yahwē | ḥêlô ûpō'al yādāw | tirṣeh	bārēk yahwē ḥêlô pō'al yādēw tirṣeh
b) mᵉḥaṣ | moṯnayim qāmāw ûmᵉśan'āw | min-yᵉqûmûn	mᵉḥaṣ moṯnē-mi qāmēw mᵉśan'ēw min-yᵉqûmûn
12) lᵉḇinyāmin 'āmar yᵉḏîḏ yahwē | yiškōn labeṭaḥ 'ālāw ḥōpēp 'ālāw | kol-hayyôm ûḇên kᵉtēpāw | šāḵēn	yᵉḏîḏ yahwē hiškōn labeṭḥ 'ēlî ḥōpēp 'ālēw kol-yôm bēn kᵉtēpēw šāḵēn
13) ûlᵉyôsep 'āmar mᵉḇōreḵeṯ yahwē 'arṣô mimmeḡeḏ šāmayim | miṭṭāl	mimmaḡd šāmē mi ''al
ûmittᵉhôm rōḇeṣeṯ tāḥat	mittᵉhôm rōḇeṣṯ tāḥt
14) ûmimmeḡeḏ tᵉḇû'ōṯ šāmeš ûmimmeḡeḏ gereš yᵉrāḥîm	mimmagd tᵉḇû'ōṯ šāmš mimmagd garš yariḥ

9a) MT 7:7 R 5:5 St. omits as prose		
9b) MT 8:8 R 8:7 St. 7:7 St. omits kî		
10a) MT 10:9 R 9:8 St. 9:9 St. retains *waw*		
10b) MT 10:8 R 10:7 St. 9:9 St. retains *waw*		
11a) MT 6:7 R 6:6 St. 6:6		
11b) MT 7:8 R 7:7 St. 7:7		
12) MT 11:7:7 R 8:8:6 St. 8:8:7 Even though Stuart retains the *waw* in the third colon, he still does not achieve balance between all three cola.		
13) MT 8:9 R 6:6 St. 6:6		
14) MT 9:9 R 6:6/5 St. 6:6		

Masoretic Text	*Reconstructed Text*		
ṯmērō'š harē-qedem	mimmagd harē-qadm	15) MT 7:8 R 6:6 St. 6:6	1:1
ṯmimmeḡeḏ giḇ'ôṯ 'ôlām	mimmagd giḇ'ôt 'ôlām		
ṯmimmeḡeḏ 'ereṣ ûmᵉlō-'āh	mimmagd 'ārṣ ûmᵉlōāh	16a) MT 10:8 R 7:7 St. 7:7	1:1
ṯrᵉṣôn šōkᵉnî sᵉneh	rᵉṣôn šōkᵉnî sᵉneh	16b) MT 7:8 R 7:7 St. 7:7	1:1
ṯḥḇ' ṯāh lᵉrō' š yôsēp	tihyena lᵉrō' š yôsēp		
ṯḥqodqōd nᵉzîr 'eḥḥâw	lᵉqodqōd nᵉzîr 'eḥḥāw		
ṯkôr šôrô | hāḏār lô	bᵉkôr šôr hāḏār lô	17a) MT 7:7 R 6:6 St. 6:6	2:2
ṯqarnê rᵉēm | qarnâw	qarnê rᵉēm qarnêw		
ṯbahēm | 'ammîm yᵉnaggaḥ	bahēm 'ammîm yᵉnaggaḥ	17b) MT 7:6 R 7:5 St. 6:6 Stuart emends	2:2
ṯyaḥḏāw | 'aṗsê-'ereṣ	yaḥdēw 'aṗsê-'arṣ		
ṯhēm | ribᵉḇôṯ 'eṗrayîm	hēm ribᵉḇôṯ eprēm	17c) MT 8:7 R 6:6 St. 6:6	2:2
ṯhēm | 'alpê mᵉnaśśeh	hēm 'alpê mᵉnaśśeh		
ṯzᵉḇûlun'āmar		18) MT 9:9 R 9:8	2:2
ṯśmaḥ zᵉḇûlun | bᵉṣē'ṯeḵā ṯyiśśāḵar | bᵉ'ōhālêḵā	śᵉmaḥ zᵉḇûlun bᵉṣē'ṯeḵā yiśśaḵār bᵉōhālêḵā		
ṯammîm | har-yiqrā'û ṯām yizbᵉḥû | ziḇḥê-ṣedeq	'ammîm har yiqrā'û šām yizbᵉḥû ziḇḥê-ṣidq	19a) MT 6:8 R 6:7 St. 7:7	2:2
ṯkî šᵉpa' yammîm | yînāqû ṯᵉpûnê | ṭᵉmûnê ḥôl	kî šap' yammîm yînāqû śᵉpûnê ṭᵉmûnê ḥôl	19b) MT 8:8 R 7:7 St. 7:7	2:1
ṯsᵉpāḏ 'āmar		20) MT 5:9 R 5:7 St. 7:7	2:2
ṯmalûk marḥîḇ gāḏ			
ṯklāḇî' | šaḵēn	kᵉlāḇî šāḵēn		
ṯtāraṗzᵉrôa' | 'ap-qodqōḏ	ṭāraṗ zᵉrô' 'ap qodqōḏ	Stuart emends	
ṯyar' ṟe' šîṯ lô			
ṯām ḥelqaṭ mᵉḥōqēq sā-			
ṯyᵉṭē' ro' šê 'ām			
ṯqaṭ yahwē 'āsāh			
ṯpāṭâw 'im-yiśrā ēl			

Masoretic Text	*Reconstructed Text*
22) ûlᵉḏān 'āmar dān | gûr 'aryēh yᵉzannēq | min-habbāšān	dān gûr 'aryēh yᵉzannēq mibbāšān
23) ûlᵉnaṗtālî 'āmar naṗtālî | śᵉḇa' rāṣôn ûmālē' | birkaṯ yahwē yām wᵉḏārôm | yᵉrāšāh	naṗtālî śᵉḇa' rāṣôn mālē' birkaṯ yahwē yām wᵉḏārôm yīraš
24) ûlᵉāšēr 'āmar bārûk mibbānîm | 'āšēr yᵉhî | rᵉṣûy 'eḥḥāw wᵉṭōḇēl | bašemen raglô	bārûk mibbānîm 'āšēr yᵉhî rᵉṣûy 'eḥḥāw ṭōbel bašamn raglô
25) barzel ûnᵉḥōšeṯ | min 'ālēkā ûkᵉyāmᵉkā | dāḇeḵā	barzel ûneḥōšt min 'ālēkā kᵉyāmēkā dāḇ'ekā
26) 'ên | kā'ēl yᵉšurûn rōkēḇ | šāmayim bᵉ'ezreḵā ûbᵉḡa' awāṭô | šᵉḥāqîm	'ên kā'ēl yᵉšurûn rōkēḇ šāmē bᵉ'ezreḵā bᵉḡa' wāṭô šᵉḥāqîm
27) a) mᵉ'onāh | 'elohê qedem ûmittaḥaṯ zᵉrō'ōṯ 'ôlam	mᵉ'onāh elohê qadm mittaḥṯ zᵉrō'ōṯ 'ôlam
b) wayᵉḡarreš mippānēkā 'ôyēḇ wayyo'mer hašmēḏ	yᵉḡarreš mippānēkā 'ôyēḇ yō'mer hašmēḏ
28) a) wayyiškōn yiśrā'ēl | beṭaḥ bāḏāḏ | 'ên ya'aqōḇ	yiškōn yiśrā'ēl beṭḥ bāḏāḏ 'ên ya'qōḇ
b) 'el-'ereṣ | dāḡān wᵉṭîrôš 'aṗ-šāmāw | ya'arᵉṗû-ṭāl	'el-'arṣ dāḡān wᵉṭîrôš 'aṗ-šamēw ya'rōṗû-ṭāl

Masoretic Text	*Reconstructed Text*
...'ahrēkā | yiśrā'ēl	'ašrēkā yiśrā'ēl
...mî kāmôkā)	(mî kāmôkā)
...'am nôsa' | bayahwē	'am nôsa' bayahwē
...māḡēn | 'ezreḵā	māḡēn 'ezreḵā
...wa'aśer-ḥereḇ | ga'awāṭeḵā	ḥirb ga'wāṭeḵā
...yikkāḥašû | 'ōyᵉḇēḵā lāk	yikkāḥašû 'ōyᵉḇēḵā lāk
...'attāh | 'al-bāmôṯēmô	'attāh 'albāmôṯēmô tiḏrōk
...tiḏrōk	

Isaiah 12

...miqēm | kᵉṣō'n lᵉṯiḇḥāh	hattiqēm kᵉṣō' n lᵉṯiḇḥāh
...haqdišēm | lᵉyôm hᵃreḡāh	haqdišēm lᵉyôm hᵃreḡāh
...'ad-māṯāy | te'ᵉḇal hā'āreṣ	'ad-māṯāy te'ᵉḇal ārṣ
...ēśeḇ kol-šāḏeh | yîḇāš	ēśeḇ kol-šādeh yîḇāš
...mērā'aṯ yōšᵉḇê-bāh	mērā'aṯ yōšᵉḇê-bāh
...sāpṯāh bᵉhemoṯ wā'ôp	sāpṯāh bᵉhemoṯ wā'ôp
...'ên mērîm lō' yir'eh 'eṯ	
...ḥarîmênû	
...'eṯ-raglîm | raṣtāh	kî raglîm raṣtāh
...wayyal'ûkā	wayyal'ûkā
...wᵉ'ên 'ēk tᵉtaḥᵃreh | 'eṯ	'ên 'ēk tᵉtaḥᵃreh sûsîm
...sîm	
...ûrᵉṣeṣ šālôm | 'attāh bôṯē-	bᵉārṣ šālôm 'attāh bôṯēḥ
...ḥ	
...'ēk ta'ᵃśeh | biḡ'ôn	êk ta'śeh biḡ'ôn yardēn
...yardēn	
...gam-'aḥêḵā ûḇêṯ-ābîḵâ	kî ḡam-'aḥêḵā ûḇêṯ-'ābîḵā
...gam-hēmmāh | baḡᵉḏû bāk	gam-hēmmāh bāḡᵉḏû bāk
...gam-hēmmāh | qarᵉû 'aḥᵃ-	gam-hēmmāh qārᵉû 'aḥrē-
...rê mālē	ḵā mālē
...'al-ta'men | bām	'al-ta'men bām
...kî yᵉḏabbᵉrû 'ēlēḵā | ṭôḇôṯ	kî yᵉḏabbᵉrû ēlēḵā ṭôḇôṯ
...'eṯ | 'eṯ-bêṯî	'āzaḇtî bêṯî
...'eṯ | 'eṯ naḥᵃlāṯî	nāṭāštî naḥlāṯî
...'eṯ | 'eṯ yᵉḏiḏûṯ naṗšî	nāṯattî yᵉḏiḏûṯ naṗšî
...bᵉyᵉḇēhā	bᵉkaṗ 'ōyeḇēhā

22) MT	4:7		
R	4:6		
St.	6:6		
Stuart emends			
23) MT	7:7:7		
R	7:6:6/7		
St.	6:6:6		
24) MT	7:6:8		
R	7:6:6		
St.	7:6:6		
St. admits imbalance			
25) MT	10:8		
R	9:7		
St. may be right when he says something has dropped out			
26) MT	6:9:9		
R	6:8:7		
St.	6:6:6		
St. emends			
27a) MT	8:9		
R	7:7		
St.	7:7		
27b) MT	10:5		
R	9:4		
St.	9:9		
Stuart emends			
28a) MT	8:6		
R	6:5		
St.	6:6		
St. emends			
28b) MT	8:8		
R	7:7		
St.	7:7		
29a) MT	6:[4]:6		
R	6:[4]:7/6	2:[1]:2	
St.	6:6		
29b) MT	5:10	2:2	
R	5:5		
St.	7:7		
St. adds verbs			
29c) MT	10:10		
R	9:9	2:2	
St.	10:10		
3b) MT	8:9		
R	8:8	2:2	
4a) MT	9:9	2:2	
R	7:7		
4b) MT	7:8		
R	7:8	1:1	
5a) MT	10:10	2:2	
R	9:7		
5b) MT	11:10	2:2	
R	8:7		
6a) MT	10:7:12		
R	10:7:11	1:2:2	
6b) MT	5:10		
R	4:10	2:2	
7a) MT	6:8		
R	5:6	2:2	
7b) MT	9:6		
R	8:6	2:1	

Masoretic Text	*Reconstructed Text*	
8)		
a) hāyᵉṯāh-lî | naḥᵃlāṯî	hāyᵉṯāh-lî naḥlāṯî	8a) MT 8:6
kᵉ'aryēh bayā'ar	kᵉ'aryēh bayā'ar	R 7:6
b) nāṭnāh 'ālay | bᵉqôlāh	nāṭnāh 'ālay bᵉqôlāh	8b) MT 7:6
'al-kēn śᵉnē'tîhā	'al-kēn śᵉnē'tîhā	R 7:6
9)		
a) ha'ayiṭ ṣābûa' naḥᵃlātî lî		
ha'ayiṭ sabîb 'alēhā		
b) lᵉkû 'ispû | kol-ḥayyaṭ haś-	lekû 'ispû kol-ḥayyaṭ	9b) MT 10:7
śādeh		R 9:7
hetāyû | lᵉ'okᵉlāh	hetāyû lᵉ'okᵉlāh	

Critique

The Syllable Count Approach

Theoretically, syllable counting is a valid method of determining the metric structure of a poem. According to J.C. la Drière, the syllable is the basic rhythmic unit in all languages, being the product of a single chest pulse. When the syllables of a poem are 'isochronous'(71), then syllable counting is an appropriate approach to meter. As a matter of fact, the meter of the poetry of two modern languages, Japanese and French, is based on syllable counting(72).

But the relevant question is whether or not *Hebrew* poetry is best approached in the way of Cross, Freedman and Stuart. As a result of the analysis of the above two poems and by other considerations, the answer is negative.

In the first place, there are problems inherent in reconstructing the text *per se*. Cross and Stuart radically reconstruct the text in an attempt to restore the poems' original vocalization. The reconstruction involves both consonantal and vocalic changes, as well as outright emendations. The major problem herein is the fact that it is extremely dubious to found a metrical theory upon an emended text.

(71) J. C. LA DRIÈRE, "Prosody", in A. PREMINGER (ed.), *Princeton Encyclopedia of Poetry and Poetics* (Princeton, New Jersey, 1974) 674.

(72) Unfortunately, the proponents of the syllable counting method have not pointed this out or made comparisons between these contemporary syllable counting poetic traditions and their theories about ancient Hebrew poetry.

A glance at Stuart's scansion of Deut 33 shows that he often achieves metrical balance between cola by emendation, even without versional support (cf. vv. 7b.14.17b.19a.20a.26.27b.28a). It is only too easy to prove a metrical theory when recourse is taken to textual emendation of this sort. In other words, the researcher makes the text fit his theory. Apart from the emendation of the text, the restoration of the "original" consonantal and vocalic form of the text also presents many difficulties. In brief, little is known about the state of Hebrew grammar in the time when the Old Testament was composed. This is one of the major reasons why some syllable counters(73) prefer an unreconstructed MT. Furthermore, even if one accepts Stuart's rules of textual reconstruction, it immediately becomes obvious that the rules leave him free to achieve numerical equality between cola. For example, Stuart states that the ending of the feminine singular noun could be either **-tu* (one syllable) or **-atu* (two syllables)(74). In addition, he posits that "alternate forms of constructs, suffixes, prepositions, *etc.* were varied in the poems *metri causa*..."(75). With such flexibility, great advantage is given to the proponents of syllable counting.

Another problem inherent in the syllable counting school is the inconsistent application of the rules, in order to achieve what they consider to be a structured metrical pattern. The best example is to consider the way that Stuart treats the conjunction at the beginning of a colon. As early as 1948, Cross and Freedman demonstrated that a *waw* at the beginning of a poetic line is a later prosaic insertion and is better omitted from a poem; Stuart concurs(76). He betrays, however, much inconsistency concerning which conjunctions he deletes and which he retains. For example, in Deut 33,16a Stuart omits the *waw* before the second colon, in order to achieve a balanced bicolon. In verses 17a, 18, *etc.*, though, he retains the *waw* in order to balance the lines. Moreover, Stuart treats the conjunction *kî* in an equally inconsistent manner. Of the two occurrences of *kî*

(73) Note especially D. N. Freedman and R. C. Culley.

(74) I do not deny the possibility that there could have been two alternate forms for the ending of feminine singular nouns. I am merely pointing out that such rules as this one allows the syllable counter great flexibility in order to achieve syllabic equality.

(75) D. K. STUART, *Studies in Early Hebrew Meter*, 27-28.

(76) D. K. STUART, *Studies in Early Hebrew Meter*, 88 n. 4.

in Deut 33, Stuart retains it once (19a) and omits it the other time (9c). Due to the fact that he does not give a note in order to explain his reasoning, the reader is left with the impression that his motives for retaining or deleting these adjectives were purely metrical. In conclusion, it is clearly dangerous to found a metrical theory upon an emended-restored text, and unfortunately, this is precisely the pitfall in which the Cross–Stuart approach to meter falls. It has taken the text and made it fit their theory.

In the second place, the results of the analysis of Deut 33 and Jer 12 show that the method of counting syllables does not yield consistent results. When unwarranted emendations and inconsistently applied rules of textual restoration are laid aside, the number of syllables in a poem do not betray any kind of metrical pattern. It should also be noted that, even on the basis of Stuart's count, there is poetical imbalance(77). On the basis of a less free restoration of the MT, however, the unbalanced cola are in the majority. In Deut 33, of 37 bicola and tricola, only 16 are balanced, while 21 are unbalanced (9 lacking only one syllable). Jer 12 shows greatest imbalance with only three bicola which balanced and twenty-three which do not (eight lacking a single syllable)(78). In sum, the conclusion of this syllable count is that the Hebrew poet was concerned neither consciously nor unconsciously with achieving equality of cola in terms of the number of syllables.

Lastly, even granting the counts of Stuart, Freedman and others, do they really show the *metrical* pattern of the poem? The patterns of the poems analyzed here are not 'metrical' at all. Research in poetic theory shows that the patterns demonstrated by Stuart and Freedman(79) lack one major ingredient which would constitute the pattern as meter, *repetitiveness*. Paul Fussel, Jr., for example, has stated that the main difference between rhythm and meter is regularity and predictability. In his words: "Meter is what results when the rhythmical movements of colloquial speech are heightened, organized, and regulated so that pattern emerges from the relative haz-

(77) Note, for example, Stuart's count for Deut 33,12.24.

(78) Notice, however, that the poems with the highest degree of parallelism have a stronger tendency toward having an equal number of syllables.

(79) Stuart and Freedman, however, end up with completely different types of "patterns" for the poems which they analyse. While Stuart's count yield isosyllabic bi-and tricola, Freedman's do not.

hazard of ordinary utterance"(80). All speech (prose and poetry) is characterized by rhythm, and according to J.C. la Drière:

> The rhythm of speech is a structure of ordered variation in the quantitative aspects of the flow of sound in which contrast is balanced by a cyclic recurrence of some identity. Meter is a fixed schematization of the cyclically recurring identity in a rhythmical series(81).

Or, as he states elsewhere:

> Metrical rhythm is distinguished from that of prose by having as the unit of cyclic recurrence not the group-entity but an entity constituted 'artificially' by abstraction and recombination of prosodic components of the group in some fixed scheme(82).

These quotations serve to postulate that a *metrical* pattern is characterized by a repetitive and fixed schematization of the rhythm. The question which now must be asked is whether or not the patterns presented by Stuart and the others fit such a description. The answer is decidedly negative. While Stuart shows that cola within bi- or tricola have the same number of syllables, there is no wider pattern which fits the whole poem. For instance, Stuart's 'pattern' for the fifth part of Judg 5 (vv. 28-30) is 10:10 :: 4:4 :: 4:4 :: 9:9 :: 6:6 :: 4:4 :: 7:7:7; it thus shows no repetitiveness(83). Similarly, while Freedman does not attempt to show that parallel cola are equal in terms of syllable count, one would be hard pressed to call his results "repetitive" or "predictable"(84). Finally, most of the proponents of the syllable counting approach to Hebrew meter also argue that the poems were orally composed and then handed down. The use of formulas, a sign of oral composition, also betrays the presence of a metrical schema according to Cross and Stuart (follow-

(80) P. FUSSEL, JR., "Meter", in *Princeton Encyclopedia*, 496-497.

(81) J. C. LA DRIÈRE, "Prosody", 670.

(82) J. C. LA DRIÈRE, "Prosody", 676.

(83) As a second example, here is Stuart's syllable count for the second Balaam oracle (p. 111) 8:8::7:7::8:8::7:7::8:8::7:7::7:7::6:6::8:8::7:7::7.

(84) Freedman seeks to show that large units like stanzas in a poem have a similar number of syllables, not that cola within bicolon are isosyllabic. For one example of many, see FREEDMAN and HYLAND, "Psalm 29", 239-200.

ing Parry and Lord). The meter's function was to facilitate the composition of the poem which occurred at each recitation. Yet, with the patterns which Stuart uncovers, it is extremely difficult to imagine how this helped the bard in his composition.

In spite of these serious reservations raised about the effectiveness of syllable counting as an accurate guide to the metrical structure of a Hebrew poem, the method does provide insights into the stylistic structure of the poem(85). The *tendency* toward an equal number of syllables between cola in Hebrew poetry may be the result of parallelism; the fact that one colon repeats the thought of another means that the number of syllables in each colon would be approximately equal. Parallelism may also explain the fact that in the analysis above there was a higher proportion of balanced cola in those poems which are characterized by strong parallelism (Deut 33) than in the one which was not (Jer 12).

Syntactic-Accentual Approach

To date, very little has been written about the syntactic-accentual approach to Hebrew meter. Also, few poems have been subjected to analysis on the basis of this approach. Only two complete poems, in fact, Ps 44(86) and Prov 8,22-31(87), have been treated thus far. This in itself provides great difficulties in the implementation and analysis of the method.

The first unanswered question is what exactly constitutes a word complex which carries the metrical stress. To be sure, both Cooper(88) and Kuryłowicz(89) give general rules, but they do not always help to solve the problem. For example, if a line is composed of a subject (S) and a verb (V), followed by an object (O), is the line to be regarded as (S + V́) + Ó or Ś + (V + Ó). While, in either case, the

(85) If this is all Freedman is saying by means of counting syllables, which is the impression one gets from reading O'Connor's interpretation of his method, then the only criticism which can legitimately be raised against him is one of unclarity. See footnote 36.

(86) J. KURYŁOWICZ, *Metrik und Sprachgeschichte*, 222.

(87) A. COOPER, "Biblical Poetics", 112-139.

(88) A. COOPER, "Biblical Poetics", 120ff.

(89) J. KURYŁOWICZ, *Studies in Semitic Grammar and Metrics*, 172ff.

line has two stresses, there is some ambiguity over the exact metrical analysis of a line like Deut 33,22:

dān gûr 'aryēh yᵉzannēq min-habbāšān

Is it Ś + (compound predicate) // V́ + (Prep. Phrase) with a 2/2 metrical pattern or (S + compound predicate) // (V + Prep. Phrase) with a 1/1 pattern? The method as elucidated by Cooper and Kuryłowicz does not allow us to decide.

Another problem is that the (non) spirantization of the *begadkefat* letters after a vowel at the metrical juncture of word complexes does not occur often enough to be an extremely valuable analytic tool. While it does occur with some regularity in Jer 12, it occurs rarely in Deut 33.

Finally, in the two poems analyzed, the resultant patterns, while considerably more balanced than by the syllable counting method, still showed some anomalies. The overall pattern of Deut 33 was comprised of 2:2 couplets with a series of 1:1 couplets in the middle of the poem. While this provides a nicely patterned structure, verse 4 is metrically inconsistent. On the other hand, Jer 12 showed more frequent deviations from a basic 2:2 pattern.

Conclusion

Two contemporary approaches to Hebrew meter have been presented in order to examine their respective effectiveness in analysing the metrical structure of Old Testament poems. Unfortunately, neither case yields unequivocably positive results. In terms of syllable counting, questions have been raised of both a theoretical and practical nature which lead me to doubt that its widespread application will help clarify metrical structure. Much scepticism also looms over the syntactical-accentual approach.

Contemporary metrists apparently have not advanced any further than their predecessors in solving the puzzle of Hebrew meter. One may question the validity of the metrical quest as did Douglas Young in an excellent article written in 1950(90). This article, entitled "Ugaritic Prosody", laid a strong case against the existence of meter in Ugaritic and Hebrew.

(90) G. D. YOUNG, "Ugaritic Prosody".

If Hebrew poetry was not structured by meter, what gave it its form? Many would reply "parallelism", but if they mean semantic or thought-parallelism, then they would be hard pressed to show how it operates as a structural device in a poem like Jer 12(91).

In conclusion, brief mention will be made of a possible alternative to meter and semantic parallelism; that is grammatical or syntactical parallelism. Syntactical parallelism has indeed been mentioned in the classical studies on parallelism, but it has not been applied in a developed way. Terrence Collins(92), however, has successfully applied a sophisticated version of syntactical parallelism to the poetry of the prophets. The same approach will likely work with the Psalms as well.

Thus, while concluding rather negatively concerning the possibility of discovering a metrical structure to the Old Testament, perhaps syntactical parallelism is the best way to understand the structure of the Hebrew poems(93).

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SOMMAIRE

Les deux approches de la versification hébraïque, le comptage des syllabes et la méthode «syntactico-accentuelle», sont analysées du point de vue théorique et pratique. Le comptage des syllabes est jugé inapproprié à cause 1) des problèmes textuels; 2) de l'inconsistance dans l'application des règles; 3) de l'impossibilité de scander Dt 33 et Jer 12; 4) du regrettable manque de régularité et de prévisibilité du modèle «métrique». L'approche «syntactico-accentuelle» est rejetée à cause 1) de l'ambiguïté de la méthode; 2) de l'impossibilité de scander Dt 33 et Jer 12.

(91) Unless, of course, one accepts a broad definition of "synthetic" parallelism which operates as a kind of grab-bag for all non-synonymous and non-antithetic lines.

(92) T. COLLINS, *Line-forms in Hebrew Poetry* (Rome 1978).

(93) J. KUGEL'S *The Idea of Biblical Poetry* (New Haven 1981) has been published recently and presents the provocative thesis that the prose-poetry distinction is wrong-minded. If he is right (and his case is well made), the whole enterprise of searching for the "key" which distinguishes prose from poetry is invalid.

ANIMADVERSIONES

The Metaphor in Job 10,17

This note attempts to determine the meaning of a difficult strophe in the Book of Job by applying the principle of congruity of metaphor(1) and by comparison with extra-biblical passages(2). The text in question, Job 10,17, has provoked a variety of explanations and since they have heen surveyed recently by Grabbe(3) there is no need for more than summary reference here. The Hebrew text runs:

(a) *thdš 'dyk ngdy*
(b) *wtrb k'sk 'mdy*
(c) *ḫlypwt wṣb' 'my*

The main obstacle to intelligibility is the second word in line (a), *'dyk*. Traditionally it is taken to mean "witnesses" (so MT and ancient versions, including LXX, Aq., Theod., Vg. and the Targums)(4) even though semantic parallelism with either line (b) or line (c) would then be totally lacking. An alternative is to assign the word a meaning related to combat (so Symm., Syr.) and many scholars prefer this solution. Yet another possibility, first proposed by Dahood(5), is to compare Ugaritic *ġdd*, "to swell", and translate "vexation" or the like, but there are objections to such a view(6). Ultimately, the problem is not one of parallelism, but of *metaphor* and the solution lies not in pitting versional evidence against modern philological proposals (based on ancient languages) but in determining which metaphor the poet is using here. If the underlying figure is forensic, then *'dyk* means "your witnesses". If, on the other hand, these lines speak of combat, as the context in

(1) M. J. DAHOOD, "Congruity of Metaphors", *VTS* 16 (Leiden 1967) 40-49.

(2) I am grateful to Professor B. Margalit of Haifa for his detailed critique of a previous draft. The views expressed here, of course, are my own.

(3) L. L. GRABBE, *Comparative Philology and the Text of Job: A Study in Methodology* (Missoula 1977) 63-66.

(4) The versional evidence is surveyed by GRABBE, *Comparative Philology*, 63. He points out, too, that form criticism favours the meaning "witness" (p. 65) but this can be countered by arguments mustered in the present note.

(5) M. J. DAHOOD, *Psalms I*, 197, followed by A. C. M. BLOMMERDE, *North-west Semitic Grammar and Job* (BiOr 22; Rome 1969) 60.

(6) See GRABBE, *Comparative Philology*, 64, who argues that the Arabic cognate primarily concerns glandular swelling and that in any case this word is poorly attested (if at all) elsewhere in Ugaritic.